

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application after this amendment. Claims 1-12 are independent. Claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter included therein. In light of the amendments and remarks made herein, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections.

By this amendment, Applicants have amended the claims to more appropriately recite the claimed invention. It is respectfully submitted that these amendments are being made without conceding the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, but merely to timely advance prosecution of the present application.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for allowing claims 2 and 5 and for indicating claim 13 includes allowable subject matter.

In the outstanding Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-13 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph; rejected claims 1 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Sato (USP 5,453,758); rejected claims 8-12 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hashimoto (USP 5,554,980); rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashimoto in view of Gillick (USP 5,530,455); rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashimoto in view of Okamoto (USP 5,502,461); and rejected claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sato in view of Hashimoto. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

By this amendment, Applicants have amended the rejected independent claims to include the allowable elements of claim 13. Based on these amendments, Applicants submit that the pending claims recite allowable subject matter. It is respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections be withdrawn and this application pass to issue.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Catherine M. Voisinnet, Reg. No. 52,327, at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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